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TO: **News/Assignment Desk or News Editor**

Cell Phone Alert Program

The Community Warning System (CWS) of the Contra Costa County Office of the Sheriff has launched a new cell phone alert program. The program allows cell phone users to be notified of hazardous material incidents and other emergencies that pose an imminent threat to human life or health. Users can tailor the alerts they receive to specific areas in the county.

"The Community Warning System uses sirens, radio and TV broadcasts, targeted telephone call-outs . . . and now, alerts to cellular telephones," said Art Botterell, Community Warning System Manager. "This is an important improvement in the public warning capability for Contra Costa County and part of our ongoing effort at improving services for the public."

Residents in Contra Costa County are invited to register their cell phone number and zip codes for which they'd like to receive these alerts. Simply go to <http://cws.cccounty.us> and enter your cell phone number and zip code selections. Then check to accept the Terms of Service and click "Submit." To change or cancel a cell phone registration, simply submit new selections using the same form.

You can get more information by emailing - cwstaff@so.cccounty.us or by calling the CWS office at (925) 313-9622.

Last year the Community Warning System was activated 11 times for a variety of emergencies, but as most of those alerts were very localized, the majority of people never heard from the system aside from the routine first-Wednesday-of-the-month siren tests.

For more information, please call:

Jimmy Lee, Public Information Officer, Contra Costa County Sheriff's Office (925) 313-2643

The Contra Costa County Office of the Sheriff offers a full range of law enforcement services to over 1,000,000 residents in the 750 square mile county. Besides patrolling the unincorporated areas, Deputy Sheriffs provide comprehensive police services to a number of contract cities and special districts. Additionally, the Sheriff's Office operates county detention facilities, provides security for the courts and runs the Office of Emergency Services. The Sheriff's Office is a leader in law enforcement having practiced Community Oriented Policing for over 150 years. Log on to www.cocosherriff.org for more information.